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1911

MOODS

DAVID M. CORY

PS3505
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1911

There are verses 'neath this cover
Good and bad;
If you think you may discover
Something sad,
Or glad,
Some new fad
To your liking, Gentle Reader,
Buy this little pad.

MOODS

David M. Cory

The Poet Lore Company
The Gorham Press
Boston

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Love me much, if but a day.

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MOODS

THE BASTARD

Child of our love as yet unborn,
Courage and honor are foes to scorn,
Sing in thy mother's womb that thou
Shalt win a wreath for a nameless brow.
Stir her breasts with the thought that she
Shall mother a child of destiny.
Into her lips I breathe my soul,
Guard it and keep it in thy control.
Naught besides may I give to thee—
Only a soul's immortality.

THE THRILL OF SPRING

I feel the presence of the Spring,
In every half-awakening thing,
A mother spirit fills the air;
The little wind sighs like a prayer.

The grass is wet with last night's tears,
And scattered here and there appears
The dandelion—golden eyes
That upward smile to tender skies.

The pulsing sap in yonder tree
Finds rythmic beat in heart of me.
Creative force seems welling up
In sturdy stalk and blue-bell cup.

The passion of the spring I feel,
The myst'ries of the earth appeal
And draw me close, and of my mood
Make me a Satyr of the wood.

* * * *

Where is my mate, that I may be
Her lover in this mystery.

LUCIFER

Beside you on the couch I lay,
Your body's half-delirious prey.

Your wooing lips that lured my soul
Beyond her fortress of control,

Lay half apart with trembling breath
Of sleep that follows passion's death.

Repose nor restful sleep I knew,
I only felt the guilt of you.

Strange voices echoed through the room,
And mocking faces pierced the gloom,

And taunted me with ruthless cries,
"How low his fallen manhood lies".

I could not rest beside you there,
I needs must drink of God's pure air.

* * * *

No quiet stars met my wild eyes—
A blood-red cross hung on the skies.

A far-off church bell seemed to toll
A requiem for my murdered soul.

LA MORT D' AMOUR

We held a sad, sad funeral,
My Lady Love and I,
And, sorrowing, each questioned each
Why our dear Love should die.

We held a sad, sad funeral,
The lilies were so sweet
Methought the breath of their white souls
Would cause his heart to beat.

My Lady's mouth, red as the rose,
Did kiss his little form,
And with a trembling hand I strove
To keep his bosom warm.

The lilies' breath made light my head,
My Lady swooned away,
And there beside his quiet bier
We slept till dawned the day.

TO CYNTHIA

In your body pink and white,
Cynthia, there is love's delight.
Let me feel the thrill again
Of your kisses' crimson stain.

When from dreams, your perfumed flesh
Round me coils its silvery mesh,
Hold me, sweet, a breathless guest
On the twin hills of your breast.

Kiss the curtains from my eyes,
Lure me back to Paradise.

O LOVE! O DREAMS!

O love, O dreams! O cruel Time
That parts us from ideals sublime!

O good resolve at early dawn,
O broken vow when shadows yawn!

O ruddy cheek at sun-bright noon,
O pallid lips beneath the moon!

O early love like clover sweet,
O poppy-lips and naked feet!

O compromise that prostitutes
To-morrow with her rightful fruits!

O Yesterday that nevermore
Will throw her sunlight on my door!

O sad To-day that brings the truth
That love and hope belong to youth!

BITTER-SWEET

I've shorn thee of thy virtues, love,
To fashion me a Saint,
And daily at her passive feet
I offer love's sweet plaint.
Her gentle hands I hold, the while
A-dreaming in her eyes
I feel the quiet atmosphere
Of true love's paradise.

But she who's shorn of virtues,
That slim, white naked thee,
Makes loud demand upon my blood
With wond'rous witchery.
I breathless hold her breasts to mine,
And taste the bitter-sweet
Of seeing my white soul be slain
Beneath her wanton feet.

TWO ROSES

I stand in her garden,
Her garden of flowers,
And pluck a white rose,
Brush a thorn from the stem,
And I think of our meetings,
The swift, happy hours—
I think of them
Over and over again.

I stand in the churchyard,
The garden of death,
And I kneel by her grave
Where the tall grasses part;
And I lay a white rose
With its pure fragrant breath
Just over her heart,
Where the first rose had lain.

LOVERS

The night was bright with stars and moon,
Across the bridge that linked the dune,
Cleft by the white arm of the sea,
You came, and all was well with me.

Beyond, the salt grass edged the beach,
And, trembling past the green sea's reach,—
Their robber-lover, bold and grim,
They swooned beneath the breath of him.

The earth seemed like a woman's breast
That cradled all things unto rest,
Save you and me, and yonder sea
In all his lover's majesty.

MATES

Out of the prison of self you drew me,
Quietly, lovingly; hardly you knew me,
Yet with divine perception of fate, you
Won me to mate you.

DESPAIR

I stand upon the sheltered rock,
  The spot we used to know,
And watch the tide come rushing in
  Upon the sand below.

How boastfully it clasps the shore,
  This wild tempestuous sea!
Its only care to waste itself
  In foaming ecstasy.

Alone I muse, nor heed the day
  Clings to the dying sun,
I only see the hopeless waves
  Retreating one by one.

MAUD

Maud is at the garden gate,
A red rose in her hair;
She will not have long to wait
Ere he will meet her there.

Ah, she never thinks of late—
Neither does she care—
It was I who o'er the gate
Once would kiss her there.

Maud is at the garden gate,
A fresh rose in her hair;
Will he have as long to wait
Ere a kiss he dare?

Often laugh I at my fate,
Swear I do not care:
There are others I can mate;
Others just as fair.

But the subtle, dying fragrance
Of that first rose in her hair
Flaunts me, taunts me, ever haunts me
Since I placed it there.

DESOLATION

I want to see her face again
  I want to see her smile;
To hold her dear true hand in mine,
  To sit and dream awhile.

To sit and dream awhile with her,
  Just know that she is there;
To feel the silence throbbing with
  Our first-love's perfect prayer.

To look in eyes that answer mine
  With heaven's honest blue;
To feel again my boyhood's faith,
  To know one woman true.

I want her smile, her lips, herself,
  Else all the world I lack,
I want to breathe her breath—I want—
  I want God's Woman back.

LOVE'S SEASONS

My golden one, my summer sun,
  My apricot of sweetness,
With thee, my dove, my first-born love
  Shall blossom to completeness.

Tho' summer die and violet sky
  'Mid misty shrouds of autumn,
Thine eyes, dear one, will need no sun
  To tell the violet sought them.

Let autumn ways of tinted haze
  The hilly snow-drift cover,
Thy hills of snow my lips shall know,
  And rose-buds there discover.

The Winter Wind may shake the blind
  And whistle 'round the corner,
Within thy arms thy magic charms
  Shall make my blood run warmer.

And when the spring on swallow's wing
  Awakes the bud that lingers,
Upon thy breast our first-love's guest
  Shall press his baby fingers.

AFTERWARDS

Come, artist, paint me a portrait,
(Dream pictures pale with time)
For love will lose the music
That lends the lilting rhyme.

Paint, like a crimson poppy,
Upon each cheek a blush;
The rest of the face cold white,
Like snow in the midnight hush;

Her eyes, a brown, and wide apart,
With the depth of quiet grief;
And give the brows a downward slant
Till they meet the poppy leaf.

Her mouth, wait, let me linger here,
For it used to change so oft,
I would have the mould I loved the best
When she kissed me long and soft.

At times her lips would tremble,
And a jealous love conceal,
Ah, make it a rose that's cleft
In twain by anger's ruthless steel.

You may paint her hair a chestnut,
Or brown if you wish to—so
That the rippling waves of tresses
Will hold the red sun's glow.

A full-length portrait, all of her
Body, white as the throne of God,
She whom I've loved, and hated, and lost
Thro' being a doubting clod.

FALLING HEAVENWARD

God created a perfect woman
  But the Devil wooed and won.
The eyes of a fallen angel
  Have a wondrous depth. Sad Nun,
Alas, tho' you heard the singing
  Of the lark at heaven's gate,
You fell at the song of your lover,
  Breast to breast, insatiate!

REDEEMED

Within the church the altar there
To me seems but a gilded chair.
The pomp, the images, the roll
Of Latin words touch not my soul.

The incense veiling Christ's pale face
Seems lacking apostolic grace.
A Pariah in the place I stand,
Save for the clasp of her clear hand.

The altar of my daily prayer
Is her pure breast. Her fragrant hair
The incense of a prayer divine—
Her clinging arms my ivory shrine.

Thro' her dear love I deem it much
The garment of my Lord to touch.

TO BEATRICE

Thoughtful eyes of dusky shade
Make me for my soul afraid.
Bosom of celestial snow
Chance of Paradise forego.
Passion lips whose crimson charm
Thro' my blood sends wild alarm,
Wond'rous hair, whose raven wing
Fragrant whispers harboring.
Sweet completeness, wherein's rife
All the wonder-joy of life.

AT THE CONFESSIONAL

A tall slim slip of a girl is she;
  And yet she hath the air
('T is strange in one so young)
  To do or dare
A dangerous thing if needs must be—
  But there,
Such idle thoughts are not for me,
  A priest with vows of ministry.

OTTILLIE

Ottillie, Ottillie,
What a wild diablerie,
Half awakened, in your eyes,
Mocks me from their azure skies.
Ottillie.

Ottillie, Ottillie,
Winsome with your witchery,
By those crimson lips of yours,
Tempted, I might break all laws,
Ottillie.

Ottillie, Ottillie,
Every river finds the sea,
Life is brief and love is sweet,
Turn to me your wayward feet,
Ottillie.

PARTING

So sorrowful our last day dawns,
So gray the sky appears.
The mist that drifts against our cheeks
Is filled with sea-blown tears.

The little wind that cries among
The grasses on the dune
Seems like a sigh from your sad lips,
Till now with joy attune.

The crescent beach lies in the mist
A waste of grayish blue,
Before me comes the waste of days,
Sweetheart, not lived with you.

Your wistful, tender eyes of brown
Speak what your sad lips miss:
'Twere death to part did I not gain
The heaven of your kiss.

THE TRINITY

Life—
A cradle song,
A battle cry—
A quiet grave
Beneath the sky.

Love—
One woman
In whose arms to find
Oblivion of womankind.

Death—
Just this—
Forgetfulness of her last kiss.

OVER THE WAY

Little white rocking chair over the way,
On the porch with the vine between,
Where has she gone who rocked herself
Into my heart unseen.

Heart in my breast that cries anew
With a hope ineffably sweet,
Would I could hear again the tune
Sung by her truant feet.

Soul of my body, commune with her soul
In longings of ecstacy,
Help her to keep her little white self
Only, only for me.

APPLE BLOSSOMS

Under the apple-tree we swung;
Above the fragrant blossoms hung,
White and pink, pink and white.
She seemed a blossom, too, I thought,
As she swung by my side as light
As rosy petal in leafy bed,
With her cheeks of pink and fair white throat.
Her pretty head
Nodded and swayed as we swung and swung,
Lazily up and lazily down;
Back and forth in the scented air
Under the trembling blossoms fair.

Swing low, my love,
My blossom sweet,
At the end of each swing
Our lips shall meet.

Swing high, my love,
Swing low, my love;
I'll cradle your head
Like a dreamy dove,
While we touch the blossoms
Pink and white,
And fall again to earth,
In our flight;
When we press once more the
Blossoms pink,
And back again to the
Earth we sink.
Sing low, my love,
My blossom sweet,
At the end of each swing
Our lips shall meet.

ALLUREMENT

Across the damp, dank meadow grass,
  Beyond the swamp-land glades,
A star from heaven is stooping down
  To light the sombre shades.

At times so near, and then, alas!
  Across the mirrored streams
It trembles, like the ecstasy
  Of unawakened dreams.

Alluring, restless star lead on,
  Nor heed the night wind sighs,
Will-o'-the-wisp, to where thou wilt,
  Thou light of her dear eyes.

TO CARA

The light-house rises white and tall
Above the foam-flecked battered wall,
And far across the desert sea
It throws a guiding light to me.

From out your curtained window lean
Beneath the star-lit skies,
And let me find my guidance true,
The light of your dear eyes.

LIKE AS THE TROUBLED WAVES

Like as the troubled waves make for the restful land,
Or weary breezes for the quiet glades,
My spirit reaches out for thee. I stand
Uncertain of myself; the twilight fades
And thro' the scented silence of Night's shades
A bird is calling softly for her mate.
Dear one, stretch forth thy hand
And lead me thro' the gate,
And let thy garden be our world.

FIRST LOVE

I've hung me a picture upon the wall;
A portrait I've painted of my first love.
No one may enter the room where the smile
Of her face beams down from the dark above,
For closed are the windows and barred the door.
But when all is quiet I take the key
And turn me the lock of that sacred room,
The shrine of the love that came first to me,
And before her portrait I stand and gaze;
The time comes back that has winged away and
I walk by her side in the autumn haze,
Yes, I hear her voice and I feel her breath
Upon my cheek like the wind in the fall.
Ah, first love is best, is truest, sweetest!
I have hung me a picture upon the wall
Of the little room in my heart.

TRANSPLANTED

Along a winding country road I found a wild-rose growing.
So fair and sweet it seemed to me 'mid Nature's rustic posies,
I stooped me down beside it, while the clover's breath was blowing,
I will take it home and plant it in my garden of red roses.

Then farther down the road I saw
A sun-kissed daughter of the farm
Come running out from porch-crowned door,
With water-pail upon each arm.

Near the well I paused and watched her;
O'er the fast decaying place,
Youthful beauty leaning, laughing
At the fair reflected face
Smiling to her from the mirror
In the bucket's close embrace.
I will woo and take her homeward;
This no spot for budding grace.

Soon the fragrance of the rose-bed in my garden kept with care
'Gan to stifle and to smother my wild-rose that was so fair.
And the wildness of her beauty lost its charm 'mid flowers rare.
She was dying for the sighing of the grasses by the road,
And the murmur of the wild-bee with his honey-scented load.

And the maid whose rustic beauty charmed my eye
when at the well,
Drest in velvets, silks, and laces, lost her own peculiar spell,
And her beauty faded, faded, like the tune of some
sweet bell.

THE MERMAID

I saw in the waves a pair of eyes,
A pair of mermaid's eyes.
They gazed at me with sweet surprise,
With sweet surprise they gazed.
And a soft voice came from the laughing waves,
"Come to my arms, be not afraid, be brave,
O timid mortal!
Plunge into the sea,
Confide all to me,
And I will make thee
The King of the Sea!"

Her voice like a bell,
A singing sea-shell,
Drew me close to the wave;
And her eyes held mine
In a spell divine;
My heart grew hot and grave.
Her white arms she spread
On the foamy bed
Of the rocking blue.
She called me once more,
"Come, love, and adore
Me as I do you!"

Into the laughing waves I leaped.
Close and fast her fair arms bound me
To her bosom warm and white.
Her kisses fell on my gasping lips,
And her tresses wound around me.
She held me close
Till my struggling breath
She kissed away
With her lips of death.

My senses wandered away, far away.
Was it her kisses, or was it the spray?
Her clinging arms that held me tight
Were cold as the wings of the waves at night.
Her voice that wooed like the coo of a shell
Now rung in my heart like a funeral knell.
"Maiden!" I gasped, "Death lurks in the wave!"
But the voice of the mermaid rang softly,
"Be brave;
Confide all to me,
And I will make thee
The King of the Sea!"

IN WAR TIME

Oh Summer Wind with soft, warm sighs,
My heart is sighing, too.
Oh pale wan Moon, in dim, gray skies,
See you my Lad in Blue?

Last night I heard the whippo'will,
But who has changed his tune?
No longer now a silvery thrill
Beneath a silvery moon.

His shrill notes echoed in the glade,
And ever in my dream
It sounded like the fife that played
Amidst the steel's cold gleam.

The breeze-blown boughs beat strange tattoos
Upon the answering wall;
Try as I might, I could not choose
But hear the wild drum's call.

Oh Lady Moon, watch o'er my love!
Oh Winds, blow soft and true!
And safe upon the battle field
God keep my Lad in Blue.

OUR TOAST

Fill the bumper up, my boys,
  Dewey and his men!
Make a patriotic noise,
  Cheer and cheer again!

Down with Spain! Her yellow rag
  Trample in the dust!
Hoist the Stars and Stripes—our flag
  Leads a cause that's just.

Captive Cuba shall be free,
  Tyranny shall cease,
O'er the flag of Liberty
  Shine the star of peace!

Fill the bumper up again—
  Dewey is our toast!
Throw away the craven pen,
  Make the sword our boast!

Hoist Old Glory o'er our head!
  Here's to every star!
Cheer the blue, the white, the red,
  And every gallant tar!

A-COMIN' HUM

My boy's a-comin' hum at last!
I hardly can keep still,
To think that Tom is almost here
Clean takes away my will.

The farm is runnin' by itself,
The chores is left undone,
The weeds hev almost choked the corn
A-reachin' for the sun.

It seems like years since last I heard
Him whistlin' down the lane.
I want to hear him holler "Dad!"
An' see his smile again.

I can't do nothin' now but sit—
An' listen for his drum.
The war is over, thank the Lord!
An' Tom's a-comin' hum.

WHEN THE CHORES ARE DONE

The road is a windin' dusty one,
An' marked by a rickerty line
Of fence-rails hid by goldenrod
An' clamberin' ros'berry vine.

The chaise is a derned old creakin' thing,
But the gal inside is fair,
An' the lips are red that chirrup "git-ap"
To Betsey, the old gray mare.

An' life at the farm would be twice as hard,
From risin' to settin' sun,
Ef 't warn't that those lips were pursed for a kiss
When the evenin' chores are done.

WOOING-TIME

The wild-rose smiled from the grasses gray
That skirted the dusty, dry roadway;
The golden-rod in the gathering gloom
Silently waved his flaming plume;
And the straggling fence-rails like a vine
Climbed up the hill to the dim sky-line.

Polly and John in the creaking chaise
Are careless of Dobbin's lagging ways.
The evening breeze with its perfume sweet
Comes murmuring over the ripening wheat.
The day is done and the vesper calm
Is folding the fields and clustering farm;
And beyond the eastern meadow bar
The sky is nursing the first-born star.

THE REGION OF GOD

The country, the country,
The breath of the Earth,
The mystic conception
Of annual birth!

The bareness of Winter,
The vesture of June,
The North Wind's sharp whistle,
The Summer's soft tune!

The largeness, the greatness,
The region of God—
Escape from the city,
The brick and the hod!

Ah, give me the country,
A humble thatched cot,
Where God from his Heaven
Smiles down on my lot!

JENNY

Jenny churns the cream to butter
In the dairy by the spring.
Of'n I creep up to listen,
Jes' to hear her sing,
W'le she keeps the dasher goin'
Clunsch-clunsch in the yeller cream;
Thrush ain't in it fer a minit,
It's sweeter'n a dream.

Both her sleeves are tucked up high,
An' her arms are w'iter
Than the skimmed milk settin' by.
Cream's a-gittin' tighter;
Jenny keeps the dasher, though,
Goin' jes' ez reg'lar,
Clunsch-clunsch in the cream below.
Gee! her arms are awful strong,
She don't seem to mind it,
Fer she's singin' all along.

"Can't I help you some?" sez I,
Makin' b'lieve I'm passin' by,
When the holl time I have ben
Thru the knot-hole peekin' in.
Jenny looks up from her work;
Gins her head a sarsy jerk.
My! pooty's a picter, she,
Standin' there 'longside the churn,
With thet yeller hair o' hern
Shinin' in the mornin' sun,
An' her bare arms rizzed in fun,
Holdin' the dasher like a gun,
An' a-sayin', with sparklin' eye,
"Halt! I'm goin' to shoot a spy!"

Jenny drives the cows home nights
  When the swamp-frog's trummin'.
Jenny's laugh and tinklin' bells,
Ringin' 'cross the medder, tells
  Me she's a-comin'.
Restin' here I stan' and wait,
Leanin' 'gin the creakin' gate,
  On the rail a-drummin'.
An' w'ile a-waitin', all along,
Jenny's laugh, jes' like a song,
  In my heart's a-hummin'.

Jenny's ollers laughin'
An' pokin' fun at me;
Callin' me a "silly feller"
Wen I sez "Your hair's ez yeller
Ez the cowslips in the medder;
An' your lips, I swan, are redder
'N the leetle wil' strawberry
In the fiel's." "Go 'long! sez she,
You"! But her eyes
(Bluer'n buzzin' bottle-flies)
Turn away. Then I git bold,
Roun' her waist I ketch a hold,
Snetch a kiss, then off I run.
Jenny only laughs, and sez,
As she shuts the kitchen door,
"You're easy scairt—might hed more
Ef you'd on'y waited!"

So I hang upon the gate.
'N then I hear her wheel a whirrin',
W'ile I stan' outside an' wait,
Wishin' thet I hed hed more;
An' at last I push the door.

"Jenny," I sez, hesitatin',
Arter lookin' quite a spell,
"Would you be willin' to—wal—
Spin my yarn fer me"
Jenny makes the wheel hum louder
Than a bumbly-bee;
An' her cheeks they git ez red
Ez pineys in the flower-bed.
"Won't you," sez I, closer comin',
"Ollers spin my yarn fer me."
An' tho' that derned old pesky
Wheel is makin' sech a hummin',
I think I hear her say "Mebbe!"

Me an' Jenny hev ben married
  Nigh onter a year.
Of'n I look back an' wonder
  How we steered so clear;
'Pears ez tho' we ollers hed ben,
  Jenny's sech a dear.

An' the baby, mos' ez fair
Ez its mother, I declare:
Jenny's eyes an' yeller hair,
Cunnin' laugh, an' silky cheeks
Red ez beeches 'long the creeks.
I'd rather set an' watch 'em
Nights a-rockin' in the cheer
Than git the fust prize fer the
Cattle at the County Fair.

  "Jem," sez Jenny, "ain't he cunnin'
Watch him kick his feet an' crow."
"Come to dad," sez I to baby.
"Hol' him right!" sez she, "jes' so!"
Baby he don't care a nickel
How you hol' him, though.
  "Keep him keerful now," sez she,
  "W'ile I git the cradle fixt.
Watch him close, he's up to tricks."
  "Hoopsy-daisy, dad's own baby!"
Baby laughs an' crows an' kicks.
  "Put him in reel tender, Jem,"
An' then she tucks him in.
  "Good-night, *my* baby!" soft sez she,
A-lookin' up so sarsily—
  "Wal, baby's yourn," sez I,
  "So long ez Jenny b'longs to me!"

EVERGREENS

Take me by the hand and lead me
Back to childhood's happy day,
To my little attic bed-room
Underneath the gables gray.

Let me hear the maple branches
Sigh beneath the summer rain;
Let me see a slant of moonlight
Play upon the counterpane;

Shadows grim and ghostly shapen
Slink behind the wooden bed,
Till I feel the least bit "queerish",
Pull the covers o'er my head.

Are the same old stars a-gleaming
On the south-west orchard trees?
Does the front porch honeysuckle
Lend its fragrance to the breeze?

Could I hear the owl each evening
From his poplar toot his horn?
Do the silken tassles rustle
In the fields of ripening corn?

I would hear all sounds familiar;
Mother's foot-step on the stair
Drawing nearer, I can hear her
Say with me my evening prayer.

THE WORLD ASLEEP

Like sentinels the watchful elms
  In sturdy grandeur stand.
In armor green they move between
  The sky and sleeping land.

The quiet stars their vigils keep;
  And o'er the silvery moon
Their laces trace in flimsy grace
  The mists from swamp and dune.

Beneath her drowsy, brooding wing
  Calm Night has silenced all
The clamors rude; 't is solitude
  Save for the gray owl's call.

The world's asleep, the sun away,
Till Time brings forth another day.

SUMMER

O the days of June,
  With their hazy tune
Of bees 'mid clover roving;
And the scent of flowers
Thro' the sun-kissed hours
  Keeps all the world a-loving.

GOOD-BYES

The sky is like the soft gray veil
  That hides my Lady's face;
The glories of the summer
  Have left a lingering grace.

A lazy, mazy atmosphere
  Hangs 'twixt the earth and sky,
And all is silence, save at times
  The wild crow's distant cry;

A murmur from the woodlawn,
  A dreamy, drowsy breeze;
The swan-song of the summer
  Thro' the red and yellow leaves.

A few late roses deck the fence
  That straggles by the road;
They seem like spirits now returned
  To haunt their June abode.

The time is fraught with parting,
  The parting of the ways,
Good-bye, sweet-scented summer,
  Farewell, dear dreamy days.

ROCKAWAY

At Rockaway the tide comes in
  With breezes from the ocean,
And like a lover woos the strand
  A-tremble with emotion.
The shadows creep along the beach,
  And over land and sea
A pale pink mist, a sea-shell's glow,
  Comes ever silently.

At Rockaway the night comes down
  And folds the silent land.
The madcap waves, now lonely grown,
  Are nestling to the sand.
The silver moon a silvery path
  Throws o'er the sleeping bay,
The ocean rocks the world to sleep
  At Rockaway.

COMRADES

I cannot call you brothers,
Dear Poets, I love so true,
This kinship that I covet
Were false to claim of you,
So I shall term you comrades
Who helped me on my way,
Whose songs made in my bosom
A rhythmic holiday.

MEDIOCRITY

The song that sweet from his fancies sprung
Oft rose to his lips, but ne'er was sung;
The music that throbbed in his anxious brain
Charmed never an ear with its sad refrain;
The love in his heart that budded and bloomed
Was unrequited, then silently tombed;
And the prize he sought he never won,
Tho' hard he strove till his work was done;
No epitaph stands for the world to scan,
He was only an ordinary man.

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

When South Wind blows soft blooms the rose
  Within her garden walls,
And nods and smiles with crimson wiles
  When Robin Redbreast calls.

The Lily slight in robe of white
  Bends graceful on her stalk,
As Monsieur Breeze with rustling leaves
  Comes gayly up the walk.

Now Xmas here, the garden drear,
  'Neath mistletoe beguiling
My lily trips, and rose-bud lips
  At me are coyly smiling.

TO MADEMOISELLE

Last night I had a leetle dream,
I dreamt, ma chere, of you.
Ze leetele dream, ma foi, how sweet
But not so sweet que vous.

I thought I was a golden bee
Wisin a garden plein de fleurs;
Je flew bien vite to kiss a rose
But kissed instead your lips, mon dieu!

Adieu, adieu, mon leetle dream!
Nous verrons, we shall see.
Some day, perhaps, je serai brave,
Allons! I play se bee!

TRANSFORMATION

In the church on Easter
Esther sat demure,
Like a calla lily,
Graceful and as pure.

Little gilt-edged prayer-book,
Far too small for use,
Read she most intently,
Was it just a ruse.

Looking up in a prayer-time
O'er the oaken pew,
Found myself encountering
Esther's eyes of blue.

Then a transformation,
White was changed to red,
And my Easter lily
Was a rose instead.

THE CHALLENGE

Out with thee Age, I will parley
Nor debate with thee each day,
When the moment comes for parting
From sweet Youth, I'll thee obey!

While I travel Life's bright post-road
Let me miss thy shadow gray;
Let to-morrow give the roses
That I gather not to-day.

When the journey ends and evening
Comes with scarce a whispering breath,
I will meet thee on the threshold
Of the tavern kept by Death.

IN MEMORIAM

When I am dead
Think not of the graveyard bare
With its withered flowers there
Quivering o'er my head.

Nor in happier sadness say,
That the summer skies will keep
Warm the bed wherein I sleep
Thro' the day;

And throughout the weary night
Patient stars, like glints of gold,
Are the tapers Angels hold
To give me light.

Rather, take my old felt hat,
Smooth the crown and brush the brim,
As you often did for him
Who swore at this and that.

Smile thro' tears, then softly hum,
"Father of my splendid boys,
Author of my woes and joys,
God keep thee till I come!"

RECOGNITION

Beneath, the dead in earthen bed
Lie sleeping, while the stars o'erhead
Look down upon the pulseless throng,—
Amen to fight twixt right and wrong.

Some day to lie there with that band,
A part and parcel of the land
Whose fruitful womb may rear the seed
I've sown with hopes beyond a weed.

Ah me, 't is hope that lights the stars
To smile on us behind the bars;
And if past death my flower bloom,
O kindly lay it on my tomb.

AD FINEM

When joyous Death runs to me and with magic hand
Severs the thong that binds my soul to earth,
Let there be music—not the notes of mirth,
But rather some long-treasured air
Of youth—the song my fair
Sweet mother used to sing. And while
She woke the blending chords, she'd smile
And o'er her shoulder throw a loving nod,
Let this song usher me to God.

MARJORIE

Little maid of winsome three,
As you sit upon my knee
Looking, oh, so wistfully,
Up at me;
What do those dark eyes of thine,
Full of innocence divine,
See in this old face of mine,
Marjorie?

Father Time with daily care
Has been ever busy there,
Marring youth that once was fair,
Marjorie.
Tell me what you see, my dear,
As I hold you fast and near,
Lots of wrinkles, odd and queer,
Marjorie?

Little hands with soft caress
Gently cheeks of grandpa press;
With sweet childhood's grace they bless
Eighty-three.
Dear, ruthless Time can ne'er efface
Nor take from love its tender grace;
So love you see in grandpa's face,
Marjorie?

NIGHT

The day is done, and Night from cave and nook
Steals forth; and with a silent, stealthy tread
Thro' streets fast dark'ning bears away the dead
Day; lived and loved and done, like tale in book.
Like eagle swift with talon and with hook,
She clutches fast the sky and drags it down—
A sable canopy above the town—
And shadows fall where smiled the glad day's look.
Above the ragged line of house-tops rise
The tall church spires to the low rimmed skies,
Like tent-poles, holding up the dim, dark dome.
The belfry chimes: the owl goes forth to roam;
And save the sometime bark of dog, no rude
Disturbance breaks the dusky solitude.

THE RAINBOW

It soon will rain, for like a hunted herd
Of dark-hide buffaloes across a plain
That sparkled where the daisies now lie slain,
A mass of thunder-bellowing clouds are spurred
Across the sky. The lightning cuts the rain
Like arrow slung from red-man's bow,
And finds the oak's stout heart, and lays it low;
And crash of oak and thunder sounds. Again
The Storm twangs forth his arrow from the cloud
That sands a breastwork hard against the grim
High frowning mountain-tops and cries aloud
Among their crevices and caverns dim.
At last, grown sick of war, he hangs his bow
On Eastern wall to catch the sunset's glow.

WORLDLINGS

When from my window I look to the street,
And see a little world unto himself
In ev'ry passer-by; the love of pelf,
The love of self, first aim for pleasure sweet,
I would I were away in safe retreat
Of glade or fairy-land, where some spry elf
Would bring me elfin wine to lose myself,
And see no more the Bad the Good defeat.
The little acts of charity and love
In this great teeming city are so rare
That I, who freshly start, oft long for air
That blows 'tween grass-green sod and blue above.
I am half-stifled with the waste of breath
For Self—that Self that ends so soon in death.

AN AUTUMN DAY

The autumn air is mild and soft and sweet,
The hills are mounted with a purple haze,
Against the crimson of the woodland ways
The tawny yellow of the fields of wheat.
Deserted corn-stalks with their tassels brown
Complain with quavering tone the wanton wind.
The poppies in their beds awake to find
Upon their sleepy heads a frosty crown.
Along the dusty road Sir Golden-Rod
To Black Eyed Susan nods and smiles away.
The nimber squirrel dances on the rail
Half hid by sweet wild rose in pink array.
And now the Western Sun, a globe of red,
Sinks o'er the mountain's brim and ends the day.

INSPIRATION

A line of sand with jutting rocks rough-strewn,
The ceaseless licking of the watery tongue,
Now lapping when a soft, mild air is sung,
Now frothing when the wind's a wilder tune.
An empty shell the same old song doth croon,
The fiddlers creep their sandy cells among;
A sea-gull passes, from its wing is flung
A feather white upon the sandy dune.

I sit and watch the changing aspect, yet
The never-changing sea; his steadfast aim
That somehow, sometime he shall wind his arms
About the long-desired land to hold and claim.
Ah, restless sea, teach me thy great unrest,
To strive with faith like thine within my breast.

THOUGHTS

What friends you are to me in idle hours,
What coigns of vantage have I gained thro' you,
Whence I may take an unobstructed view,
And undismayed gaze o'er the world's high towers;
Or else I'm led by you to sylvan bowers
Where midst the verdant shade my fancy springs
And, unabashed by eye of critic, sings
Its simple song of summer skies and flowers.

My ever ready friends whose generous hands
Stretch out to meet mine own when sorrow comes,
To lead me from the world that frets and hums,
To mountain heights, where bright-eyed Fortune stands
And cries to me to drink of Hope's clear stream—
Then earth's defeats seem but a passing dream.

SONNET

The jocund Day with mischief in her eyes
Slips thro' the misty curtains of the Night,
And throws upon the world her glances bright.
She smiles and lighter grow the sombre skies.
Before the rosy Maid the mist-cloud flies
And leaves the valley bathed in golden light,
Then fades in azure on a mountain height;
And now the last pale star in silence dies.

But amorous Night at length impatient grows
And at horizon's gate, their trysting place,
Expectant waits to clasp in his embrace
The fair young Day. She comes, and now he throws
His sable cloak about her, while her face
She softly hides and sinks to sweet repose.

TO MY MOTHER

I cannot feel that I've outgrown
A lovnig mother's care,
A tender guiding hand to know,
Unselfish love to share.

Tho' wasted moments I have let
Unthinking glide away,
Fruitless of little acts of love
A thoughtful son should pay,

Such happy memories are mine
That backward take their flight—
I feel you leaning over me
To kiss me sweet good-night.

Sweet warm rose cheeks, and heaven's eyes,
A wreath of fragrant hair,
My boyhood's days know but one face
Crowned with love's flowers fair.

From honor's code and love of God
You never let me part.
Thro' trials met on life's hard road
You cheered my troubled heart.

Your face to-day has all the bloom
It had when I was young,
Your voice, the same sweet melody
When lullabies were sung.

And while I hold your hand in mine,
Tho' father now I be,
I love to think I'm still the boy
Who prayed upon your knee.

FATHERHOOD

My children's love is like the gate to God,
Thro' which I pass to fields of star-strewn sod.
A thing perchance I might not call mine own,
Had I not bitter sorrow seen and known.
Their little hands, so tender and so pure,
Mark out a future for me to endure.
Their careless feet, that never rest till night,
I must prepare myself to guide aright
Thro' His great love that watches over men
Who lose the road awhile, and find again.

DREAMERS

The mist from the river creeps into the town
And filters thro' crevice and cranny,
Dim grows the landscape, the green and the brown
Are turned to a gray, and a leaf falling down
Looks like a gray feather dropped from the wing
Of this Mist Bird from seaward, an uncanny thing.
In the silence I dream, while the candles of night
Like fire-flies glow thro' the curtains of mist.
The day has departed and far out of sight
Some other world wakens anew with its light:
Some other man wakens—and often it seems
Accomplishes all we have dared in our dreams.

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